डा. मुरली मनोहर जोशी : आप को इस एक्जामिन करने में कितना समय लगेगा?

श्री अजीत सिंह : अभी तो कुछ ही महीने की बात आप ने कही है।

डा. मुरली मनोहर जोशी : फिर तो बहुत कठिन है क्योंकि गन्ना तो खेत में दो ही महीने के लिए खड़ा है।

श्री अजीत सिंह : आप सही कह रहे है। इसके बारे में सरकार चाहती है कि बाय-प्रोडक्ट्स और दूसरे आल्टरनेटिव यूजेज हो सकें। इस बारे में सरकार प्रयत्नशील है। जहां तक गुड़ के बारे में सवाल है जितनी भी खांडसारी की स्टाक लिमिट वगैरा थी, वह सरकार ने दोगुनी से ज्यादा कर दी है। गुड के ऊपर से सब नियंत्रण हटा दिए गए हैं। प्रदेश से बाहर भेजने के लिए एक्सपोर्ट के लिए के लिए गुड पर जो नियंत्रण थे, वह सरकार ने खत्म कर दिए है। लेकिन गुड के जो दाम है वह सरकारी नियंत्रित चीजों के दामों में नहीं आते कि इसके दाम सरकार तय कर सके। लेकिन जितनी मदद हम खंडसारी और गुड व्यापार और प्रोडक्शन को कर सकते हैं। वह हम कर रहे हैं।

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have taken nearly half an hour.

Supply of Sub-Standard Goods to Russia

*142 SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstrarred Question 50 given in the Rajya Sabha on 27th November, 1995 and state:

(a) the number of exporters booked for exporting sub-standard good to Russia in the last one year giving the details of such exporters and the items exported by them;

(b) the details of the exporters exporting leather goods to Russia; and

(c) the number of complaints received against them for supplying sub-standard leather goods giving the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

THE MINISTRY OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

During the year 1995, panal action has been taken by the Director General of Foreign Trade against the following exporters for exporting sub-standard tea to Russia:

(a) M/s. Amusar Impex Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta

(b) M/s. India Tea Produce Co., Calcutta.

In addition, action has been initiated by the DGFT in 1995 against one firm, namely, M/s. Shanta Projects Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, for alleged export of sub-standard tea to Russa.

According to available information, 78 firms have exported leather goods to Russia during 1994-95. Out of these, 48 are Export Houses, 12 are Trading Houses, 3 are Star Trading Houses and 3 are Super Star Trading Houses. No complaint has been received so far in the Directorate General of Foreign Trade against any of the exporters for supplying sub-standard leather goods to Russia during the above mentioned period.

श्री ओ.पी.कोहली: महोदय, मेरा मंत्री जी से प्रश्न है भारतीय निर्यातक अपने सामान की आपूर्ति करते समय घटिया माल का निर्यात न करें और गुणवत्ता मानकों का कड़ाई से पालन करें यह सुनिश्चित करने की मौजूदा व्यवस्था क्या है? इस व्यवस्था में क्या कमजोरियां सामनें आई हैं ? इस व्यवस्था को मजबूत करने के लिए सरकार ने क्या उपाय किए हैं ?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, as far as substandard goods are concerned, in the case of tobacco and tea, exports under the rupee payment account are subject to preshipment inspection. But, in all other cases, we leave it to the importer and the exporter to stipulate the standards. When a complaint is received there is a process for examining that complaint and taking suitable action. Apart from the Director-General of Foreign Trade, who looks into these complaints, the Customs authorities as well as the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence will also look into these complaints. Sir, we have Regional Sub-Committee at a

large number of Port Offices. When a complaint comes, the matter is placed before the Regional Sub-Committee in order to bring the exporter and the importer together to resolve that complaint either by conciliation or by arbitration. Where conciliation or arbitration cannot resolve that complaint, then action will be taken accordingly. If the complaint was registered prior to June, 1992, then action will be initiated under the Import-Export Control Act and if the complaint was registered after June, 1992, then it comes under Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act. But, Sir, the complaints are small in number. Whatever complaints come to us, there is an established procedure for taking action.

श्री ओ.पी.कोहली : सभापति महोदय, मेरा दूसरी सप्लीमेंटरी यह है एक्सपोर्ट अंडर द ड्यूटी एग्जम्पशन स्कीम के अंतर्गत 1994, 1995 और 1996 वर्ष में अब तक जाली निर्यात के फेक एक्सपोर्ट के कितने मामले सामने आए हैं, इन मामलों में कितने निर्यातकों और कितने कस्टम अधिकारियों के खिलाफ कार्यवाही की गई है ? जाली निर्यात के इन मामलों में सरकार को कुल मिला कर कितनी राजस्व हानि हुई है ?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, this, I am afraid, is entirely a different question and I would require a separate notice because Duty Exemption Scheme is a completely different scheme and thousands of licences are issued. If a separate question is put, I will be very happy to answer on the basis of the complaints under the Duty Exemption Scheme. *(Interruptions).* This is not under the Duty exemption scheme. This question, Viren ji is about export to Russia....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Dineshbhai Trivedi.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Thank you, Sir, The question relates to substandard exports to Russia and it is very kind of the Minister that he touched upon the import from Russia and export to Russia. Sir, my question is very pointed. We, appreciated it if the hon. Minister names the agencies involved in case there is substandard export. My question to the hon. Minister, Sir, is what happens not only when there is a substandard import but when there is an import of obsolete items where defence is involved. Sir, I am referring to a very, very important revelation which has come just today in the media that the Government has almost finanlised import of US$200 million worth of 152 mm guns from Russia in spite of the objection and rejection from the Indian Artillery *(Interruptions).*

It relates to export-import because there is an ambitious project for export of artillery as well. I can fully appreciate the point that the hon. Minis:;.' is not prepared with the answer, but he could let us know after getting the information from the various departments because this is a very important issue relating to export-import of absolete items of defence from Russia. Thank you.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: It is not a question of my being unprepared. Sir, you may kindly appreciate that defence imports and defence exports are not subject-matters with the Minsitry of Commerce.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Now that you are aware, you can get the information. *(Interruption)*

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I relate my question to the Unstarred Question No. 1030 of today. It is also on the same subject, i.e., complaints agaisnt export of substandard goods.

Two questions arise here. One is; not only the name of a particular exporter gets defamed, but the country, as such, also gets a bad name. We get into a situation when it does not add to our prestige, but it damages our reputation, on the contrary.

The second question which arises from this is - the hon. Minister of Finance is also sitting here - there is a violation of the Foreign Exchange Regulations. We read nowadays about the various kinds of hawala or improper payments. Substan-

dard goods exported could be a channel for that. The hon. Minister said earlier that as per the established procedure, action was being taken. May I know from the hon. Minister, through you, Sir, whether there is any proposal with the Government, as such, to take a much more strict and expeditious action against these people who do damage to the name of the country and who also violate the rules concerning foreign exchange, creating thereby the other related complications of corruption, etc? Is there any thought being given by the Government, as a whole?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, section 8 of the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act provides that the Director-General, if he has reason to believe that any person has made export in a manner gravely prejudicial to the trade relations of India with any foreign country, or, to the interests of other persons engaged in import or export, or, has brought disrepute to the credit of the goods of the country, he can take action.

Therefore, we have provisions which take care of the situation which the hon. Member is talking about. Now, action has to be .according to the law. Show-cause notices have been issued. We have imposed fiscal penalties in some cases. But recovery is left to the State Governments and the District Administration. Sir, I would take this opportunity to appeal to the State Governments that when fiscal penalties are imposed and Revenue Recovery Certificates are issued, the District Collectors must recover the amount and send it on to the Government of India. The Government of India has no other separate machinery today.

We are also cancelling the importer-exporter code number. We have also started taking steps now by addressing the Export Promotion Councils and the apex chambers asking them to remove the defaulting member from the membership of these councils.

Therefore, Sir, action at various levels is being taken.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Sir, I wanted to know whether it was possible to take more stringent action by amending the laws. Merely imposing fiscal penalties would not serve the purpose. They do not recover the amount. The person may start another company under a different name and the same shenanigans can continue. From that angle, would you consider taking more stringent action providing for imprisonment, for example— to deal with such a situation so that it would act as a better deterrent and prevent these persons from indulging in such things, as they are doing now?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am reluctant to add to the number of laws in this country. There is the Enforcement Directorate which administers the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act and which provides for imprisonment. There is the Customs Administration which administers the Customs Act and which provides for prosecution. I do not think the answer lies in adding to the body of laws. The answer lies in applying and enforcing the existing laws.

SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUT1NAN: Mr. Chairman Sir, my supplementary relates to leather exports. 1 am glad to see the answer given by the hon. Minister which says; 'No complaint has been received so far in the Directorate General of Foreign Trade against any of the exporters for supplying substandard leather goods to Russia during the above-mentioned period .

I hope that this state of affairs will continue in future also.

But, Sir, in view of a recent judgement given by the Supreme Court, more than 150 leather processing units in Tamil Nadu, particularly at Vaniyambadi, Ranipcttai and other places, have been close down. Among them, units which were producing quality leather have been closed down. It was not the fault of the leather-processing units themselves. It was the fault of the State and the Central

Governments in not providing the necessary funds for having common effluent treatment plants.

I am afraid that in future there may be a shortfall in export of leather and that there may be production of substandard leather because quality leather processing units have been closed down.

So, who is responsible for not providing funds for constructing effluent treatment plants in those places? Is there any possibility of reduction in the export of leather products in future? Is there any possibility of exporting substandard leather to Russia and other foreign countries?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, although this supplementary does not directly arise from this question, I would be happy to answer this. If anyone is responsible for the situation in which the leather-goods manufacturers in Tamil Nadu find themselves today, it is the Council which is unwilling to take action against a handful of people who have frustrated the will of the Council.

Sir, we used to levy a cess on leather exports. It was coming to the Consolidated Fund. It was transferred to the Council for Leather Exports. The Council represented that this was an inefficient system and that they should allowed to levy the cess themselves, to collect it and to spend it on common effluent-treatment facilities as well as other common facilities. The Finance Minister kindly agreed to my recommendation. So, in the last Budget in 1995, we withdrew this tax. We gave the Council the power to levy the cess. The Council solemnly resolved to levy the cess. Two or three persons went to the Court and challenged it. The Court struck it down. Now there is an appeal with the Supreme Court.

All that I can do is to> request the Finance Minster to re-impose the tax, but that can take place only in June. The point is that if a handful of people, just three or four, could frustrate the collective will and wisdom of a thousand members of the Council for Leather Exports, they have to blame themselves. Despite that, we are willing to support them for setting up common effluent-treatment facilities. But, I think, they must have the will either to manage their affairs themselves or to ask the Government to levy the tax, to collect it and to give it to them, it is entirely their choice. But, I am now recommending to the Finance Minister that as they cannot solve this matter, we should re-impose the tax.

Problem of Child Labour and Assistance from Foreign Countries

*143. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:†

Will the Minister ot LABOUR be please to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have rejected the help offered by certain countries to check the problem of child labour,

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what strategy has been adopted by Government so fare to tackle the problem and what are the results achieved?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Government is concerted about the widespread prevalence of child labour in India and is also very serious about its elimination. Government has also taken several steps to tackle the problem of child labour through legislation, general development programmes for the benefit of children and poor and implementation of National Child Labour Projects. A major programme was announced in August, 1994 for elimination of child labour in hazardous employments. Under this scheme an estimated two million

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Bapu Kaldate.